

MADDOW'S FORGERY AND MISTAKEN TIMING

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3 REALITY LEIGH WINNER IS ARRESTED
4	5 METADATA ON FILE SENT TO TRMS	6	7	8	9	10
Creation Date: 6/5/2017 12:17:15 PM						

Much of Rachel Maddow's reporting on the Russian scandal has been overly drawn out and breathless. But you should watch this piece (which is not only overly drawn out and breathless, but doesn't emphasize the most important point).

Rachel describes how, on June 7, her tip line received a smoking gun document, appearing to be a Top Secret NSA document, laying out collusion between a Trump campaign official she doesn't name (I'm going to wildarseguess, for a lot of reasons, it is Mike Flynn) and the Russians who hacked the election. She describes multiple reasons her team determined the document to be a fake: some misspellings, a declassification date that is wrong, some spacing weirdness, and that the campaign official is actually named, rather than masked as US Citizen 1.

But she also describes how the printer dots and a seeming crease on the document appear to replicate those that appear in the document Reality Winner is alleged to have provided to the Intercept.

~~Which is interesting, because as she shows about 14 minutes in (but doesn't emphasize enough), the document sent to her tip line appears to have been created between the time Reality Winner went to jail and the time the Intercept published the document (unless I missed it, she doesn't say precisely when they got the document, just that it was the same week as the Intercept published it Update: Corrected above). The creation date appears to be three and a half~~

~~hours before the publication date at the Intercept. [Update: but not the creation date for the document, see below.]~~

Rachel surmises, correctly, I think, that the person sent the document both to discredit her own reporting (in much the same way reliance on fake documents discredited Dan Rather's reporting of George Bush's real Air National Guard scandal) as well as to discredit the notion that the Trump campaign, and the person named in particular, colluded with the Russians. This was an attempt to undercut potentially real news with deliberately faked news, fed through a selected outlet.

~~That would mean one of two things. Either the person who created the document faked the metadata (or created the document from Alaska or someplace west of there). Or the person received a copy of the very same document, including the crease, either from Reality Winner or from the Intercept or one of their sources, and then used it as a template to create a fake NSA document (or had visibility into the FBI's investigation about this document). If it's the latter, then the number of people who might be involved is rather small.~~

I've suggested there are reasons to wonder whether Winner was directed towards this document. I'd say there are more questions now about whether that's the case.

Update: as PaulMD notes on Twitter, the document Rachel received actually has the very same creation time as the document the Intercept uploaded.

Update: Glenn Greenwald is pretty pissed about Rachel's insinuations.

Update: Changed the title given the mistaken timing in the Rachel story.